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UNCLAS CAIRO 009350

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: IRAQ: EGYPT SEES ELECTIONS AS "STEP FORWARD" TO COMPLETION OF POLITICAL PROCESS

REF: A. STATE 225860

[B](#). CAIRO 9315

[1](#)1. (U) The Charge delivered foreign policy reftel demarche to Presidential Spokesman and Advisor Soliman Awad ahead of Iraq's national parliamentary elections, encouraging the GOE to publicly support and congratulate the Iraqi people for their democratic achievement, once election results had been received. Awad took the message on board and committed to sharing the message within the government. Similarly, post shared reftel request with the Minister of Foreign Affairs senior staff and with the Arab League Secretariat, requesting them to be generous in their public recognition of Iraq's democratic process and the further implementation of the political process described in UNSCR 1546.

[1](#)2. (U) Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit provided Egypt's official reaction to Iraq's national parliamentary elections during a December 17 press conference. In a written press statement shared with Post, Aboul Gheit said that Iraq's elections came within the framework of implementing the political process spelled out in UNSCR 1546, which included a process of consultations among parliamentary blocs. Further, the elections were a basic step to complete that process as well as commitments made at the Iraqi national reconciliation conference in Cairo to prepare for a national conference in Baghdad in February. All such efforts, he said, contributed to serving efforts exerted to establish stability and security in Iraq with the aim of achieving the aspirations of the Iraqi people. Aboul Gheit called for support of the Iraqi people's complete right of territorial sovereignty to maintain national unity in order to achieve economic prosperity, a national government, and an elected parliament that would help completely implement UNSCR 1546, including the withdrawal of foreign forces.

[1](#)3. (U) Arab League Secretary General Amre Moussa has been publicly quiet on the subject of Iraq since the elections, although he was quoted as having said generally constructive things in the run-up to the elections during a visit to Qatar. The Arab League's envoy to monitor the elections, Farouq Al-Omad, was quoted in local media complimenting the Iraqis for their election preparations and wished Iraqis a better future via the democratic process.

[1](#)4. (U) Moussa is currently focused on organizing a national reconciliation conference in Iraq in either February or March, as agreed to by Iraqis in Cairo in November. We understand that a key piece of that planning includes the creation of a "steering group" of roughly 20 Iraqis, representing various political forces within the country, coordinated by former Sudanese Foreign Minister Ismail. This committee, which we are told was agreed to by the Iraqis in Cairo in November, would be tasked with deciding upon both the substance and administrative aspects of the Baghdad conference. Moussa intends to coordinate with UN envoy Qazi and Iraqi political figures to work out the details of the coming planning phase.

JONES